

February 3, 2000

EIS001221

Dear Ms. Dixon --

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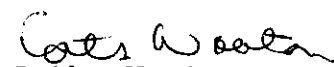
1 I am writing in response to the Department of Energy's plan to move nuclear waste through Ohio (as well as several other states) on its way to a storage facility in Nevada. [From comments made by Ohio Rep. Dennis Kucinich, who recently attended a hearing in Cleveland on this matter, it appeared that department officials would not have to mark the shipments (to indicate that they were hazardous) or notify residents that the trucks would be rolling through the streets of their cities.

I didn't know about the hearing and consequently missed the chance to voice my protest in person. However, I want to take this opportunity to do so on paper. It's bad enough that the government wants to truck radioactive waste through our neighborhoods; it would be absolutely unconscionable for them to do it without letting us know about it. I'm sure their thinking is that if they tell the truth about what they're doing and what harm it could cause, people would panic. But we have a right to panic. It's not for nothing that federal officials have spent 10 years and \$18,000,000,000 trying to figure out what to do with nuclear waste. The stuff is unbelievably dangerous. In fact, we don't even know all the dangers associated with it; those unknown evils will be the shameful inheritance of generations to come.

So what am I proposing? Well, first of all, that the Department be required to notify people in affected areas of plans to move any waste through their cities, both with signs posted on the vehicles themselves and with formal notification of impending shipments. (If the government can spend almost \$20,000,000,000 on figuring out where to put radioactive waste, they can surely afford to put letters in the mail to alert people of this danger.) I'm not happy about nuclear waste being moved anywhere, but since we've created it, we need to dispose of it in the safest way possible, and I agree with the League of Women Voters that it's better to get the waste to one or two well-regulated disposal sites than have it scattered around the country in several poorly-secured places.]

2 [My second proposal relates to the issue of creating nuclear waste in the first place. I am 40 years old, and I can remember the debates some years ago over the use of nuclear energy, in which the power companies maintained that people wanted nuclear energy (supposedly to keep pace with the growing demand for electrical power.) Well, I'll tell you what I want. I want a healthy environment for my children to grow up in, without the shadow of radioactive disaster hanging over their heads. And I'm willing to make sacrifices to achieve this goal: I try every day to live in a frugal, environment-friendly way and to teach my kids to do the same. And I know there are many other people out there like me.

I hope you will take my comments to heart when making this very important decision about the lives of people throughout the U.S. Our health and well-being -- and that of future generations -- hangs on your good judgment.


Cathy Wootan